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Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women
Sixty-sixth session

Summary record of the 1475th meeting
Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on Wednesday, 15 February 2017, at 3 p.m.

Chair: Ms. Leinarte

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The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under article 18 of the Convention (*continued*)

Combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of Ireland (continued) (CEDAW/C/IRL/6-7; CEDAW/C/IRL/QPR/6-7)

Articles 7 to 9 (continued)

1. *At the invitation of the Chair, the delegation of Ireland took places at the Committee table.*

2. **Mr. Hurley** (Ireland) said that 6 of the country's 11 Members of the European Parliament were women. Some progress had been made towards increasing the percentage of women on State boards. The issue was likely to be addressed in discussions on the development of the new National Women's Strategy. In 2016, more than twice as many men as women had applied for board positions, but women's applications had been more likely to be successful. Women accounted for 16 per cent of the members of the boards of publicly traded companies, a figure that represented a slight increase from previous years. Ireland supported the proposal for a directive of the European Parliament and of the Council on improving the gender balance among non-executive directors of companies listed on stock exchanges and related measures.

3. **Ms. Feeney** (Ireland) said that the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade had developed a conflict-prevention policy that was informed by the women and peace and security agenda. In addition, Ireland provided financial support to a range of initiatives to enhance women's participation in the prevention, management and resolution of conflict. Support had also been provided for an inquiry into the low levels of women's participation in post-conflict decision-making in Northern Ireland. Ireland was one of four donor countries to the Global Acceleration Instrument for Women, Peace and Security and Humanitarian Action.

4. Ireland implemented Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) through its National Action Plans on Women, Peace and Security. The second such Plan, for the period up to 2018, had been developed in broad consultation with relevant stakeholders and had a sharper focus on the empowerment of women in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. An 18-member oversight group was responsible for supervising implementation of the Plan. In connection with women in peace operations, it was worth noting that the Irish contingent of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force, deployed in the Golan Heights, was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Mary Carroll, the first female officer to head a contingent of Irish Defence Forces on an overseas mission.

5. Information on the number of female diplomatic staff in the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade was provided in table 28 of the annex to the country's report (CEDAW/C/IRL/6-7). Women had accounted for 61 per cent of the successful candidates in the Department's 2016 recruitment competition. In late 2016, two women and two men had won promotion to the rank of Assistant Secretary, one of the grades from which ambassadors and heads of mission were commonly chosen.

6. The Department was committed to providing a positive work environment, with a focus on dignity, respect and diversity. Its senior management had taken a number of steps in response to a gender equality audit in 2013, and a subcommittee of its management board had been given responsibility for developing a gender equality strategy that took into consideration past discrimination in the Department and the need to restore balance. Article 8 of the Convention provided a useful benchmark for the subcommittee's work, which involved studying best practices in both the private and public sectors and addressing such

issues as work/life balance, the development of family-friendly policies, overseas postings, career development and stereotyping. The gender equality subcommittee reported to the management board twice a year. A gender equality network that sought to increase women's participation in the Department was open to Department officials of all ranks.

7. **Mr. Ó Briain** (Ireland) said that Ireland had a very small Roma population consisting entirely of recent migrants. Funds for Traveller organizations had been reduced in 2007, but efforts were being made to reverse some of those cuts. Steps to encourage Travellers to participate more fully in public life, including by voting and by running for elective office, focused on the provision of support to grass-roots and community development projects.

8. **Ms. Nwankwo** said that she wished to know whether any Roma or Traveller women had been elected to public office under the State party's system of gender quotas for candidate selection and whether the State party had considered introducing quotas for the selection of candidates from specific minority groups. She wondered whether migrant integration strategies also included the country's indigenous Travellers and, if not, whether the authorities had considered including them. In addition, she asked whether the State party was willing to consider expanding the system of gender quotas to local elections, what the key findings of the inquiry into the obstacles to women's participation in the Northern Ireland peace process had been and what the State party had done in response to those findings. Did the State party's funding of NGOs working to promote women's participation in conflict resolution mean that the State party took no direct steps of its own in that regard?

9. **Ms. Baxter** (Ireland) said that the possibility of expanding the gender quota system to include local elections had been discussed during the development of the new National Women's Strategy. There were no plans to include Travellers or Roma in the Migrant Integration Strategy because those groups were the focus of a separate inclusion strategy.

10. **Mr. Ó Briain** (Ireland) said that a Traveller and Roma integration strategy containing a range of measures to address the issues faced by those communities was currently being finalized. A system of quotas for selecting candidates for office from such minority groups as Travellers and Roma would be highly impractical, not least because Travellers and Roma combined accounted for fewer than 45,000 of the country's more than 6 million inhabitants. Travellers were nonetheless encouraged to be active participants in the political life of the country.

11. **Ms. Feeney** (Ireland) said that several of the commitments made as part of the Good Friday Agreement, in particular those relating to the advancement of women, had not been honoured. Only one woman, for instance, had been appointed to the board responsible for overseeing the conversion of Her Majesty's Prison Maze into a peace centre. Photographs of the all-party negotiations of 2014 showed that women were still underrepresented.

12. The inquiry into the position of women in Northern Ireland since the Agreement had focused on gender equality; women's involvement in electoral politics, local communities and decision-making; and violence against women. The summary report on the inquiry could be forwarded to the Committee, if its members so wished.

Articles 10 to 14

13. **Ms. Gbedemah** said that she wished to encourage the State party to sustain, monitor and evaluate the initiatives it had undertaken to increase the number of girls and women studying science, mathematics and related subjects. She asked how educational programmes touching on domestic, sexual and gender-based violence were implemented and how they had been received. In addition, she wished to know how sexism and

stereotyping were monitored in the education system and what steps had been taken to combat them.

14. It would be interesting to know what efforts had been made to introduce a compulsory, comprehensive sex education programme in all schools. She would welcome more information about the Teen Parents Support Programme, such as how many teenagers had taken advantage of it. In the same connection, she wondered how many of the nearly 1,200 girls who had given birth in 2015 had returned to school.

15. She wished to know what efforts the State party had made to make apprenticeships more attractive to girls and what the impact of those efforts had been. In addition, she wondered to what extent Traveller and Roma organizations were involved in the annual updates of action plans for education, whether the State party was considering introducing temporary special measures to meet the specific needs of Travellers and Roma and whether it had any plans to diversify the range of schooling options available to children and their parents. Regarding women in higher education, she asked whether the State party had studied the gender imbalance at the highest academic ranks and, if so, what it had done to address that issue.

16. **Ms. Hayashi** asked whether, in view of the widening gender pay gap in the State party, the Government intended to require employers to report how much they paid male and female staff. In that connection, she wondered what recommendations had been made by the Low Pay Commission to address the preponderance of women in jobs paying the national minimum wage. She also wondered whether the State party intended to improve on the Homemaker's Scheme to alleviate poverty among older women who might have had to leave the workforce to care for a family member or for similar reasons.

17. Additional information on the State party's plans to consolidate maternity, adoptive, parental and carer's leave into a single piece of legislation, the Family Leave Bill, would also be welcome. It would be interesting to know, for example, whether part-time, temporary and casual workers would be eligible for leave. She wondered whether the State party's investment in affordable childcare included funding for personnel, given that care providers' pay levels tended to be low. In addition, she wished to know what efforts the State party had made to encourage men and women to share childcare duties more equally.

18. **Ms. Schulz** said that the decriminalization of travel abroad for the purpose of obtaining an abortion was a welcome development. She wondered, however, whether that measure had given the Irish authorities an excuse not to assume responsibility for the country's highly restrictive abortion laws. In that connection, she wished to know what the Government intended to do when the Citizens' Assembly presented its upcoming report on the eighth amendment to the Irish Constitution, which banned abortion in all but very limited circumstances. She also asked what roles the relevant parliamentary committee and a possible white paper would play and whether such a white paper would delay initiatives to put the issue before the people.

19. She enquired whether the Government would organize a referendum on repealing the eighth amendment if such a referendum was called for by the Citizens' Assembly and, if so, in what time frame. She also asked whether the Government would organize such a referendum even if it was not called for by the Citizens' Assembly. It would be interesting to know whether the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act 2013 would be repealed if voters approved the repeal of the eighth amendment in a referendum and whether the drafters of any new abortion law would draw on the lessons learned from the implementation of that Act. In brief, she wished to know whether any new law would ensure the reproductive rights and autonomy of women and girls, in line with international human rights standards.

20. She asked whether the State party would consider amending the current policy stipulating that three births should take place every 24 hours on labour wards; whether the new resources to be allocated to the health service would be sufficient to ensure that the rhythm of each birth was respected; whether medical staff would receive training that would enable them to cease using the various interventions currently carried out to speed up births, and the blanket consent forms currently in use; and whether midwives would be trained to perform deliveries at home.

21. **Mr. O'Leary** (Ireland) said that the Education Act of 1998 required schools to promote equality of opportunity and outcome for male and female students and to be inclusive places where diversity was acknowledged, valued and accommodated. The social, personal and health education curriculum provided a framework for schools to examine questions of gender equality and gender stereotyping. That curriculum stipulated that books and other educational materials should be free from gender bias and that gender equality should be promoted at all levels.

22. The primary school curriculum recognized that stereotyped expectations of gender roles inhibited children's educational achievement. Anti-bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools ensured that schools were committed to promoting gender equality. As part of the roll-out of the Access and Inclusion Model in early childhood education, equality and diversity training, which included training in gender equality, was delivered to all early-years practitioners. The inspectorate of the Department of Education and Skills regularly monitored the delivery of the social, personal and health education curriculum.

23. Schools delivered sexual and reproductive health education through relationship and sexuality education, which was mandatory at the primary school level and for the first three years and the senior cycle of post-primary education. Relationship and sexuality education was structured around three themes: human growth and development, human sexuality and human relationships. To promote the implementation of the social, personal and health education curriculum, including relationship and sexuality education, the Department of Education and Skills provided guidelines and teaching materials for schools and a continuing professional development programme for teachers. In addition, the curriculum in that area could be supplemented by visits from external speakers and agencies.

24. The Department of Education and Skills made home tuition available to girls who were unable to attend school for reasons related to maternity. That scheme enabled students who were parents or guardians of children to employ a tutor for up to nine hours per week. For the 2016/17 school year, the scheme had been made more flexible, giving girls up to six months in which to take a total allocation of 90 hours of tuition.

25. Traditionally, most apprenticeships had been taken up by men. Following a review of the apprenticeship system in 2014, an Apprenticeship Council had been set up to oversee the expansion of the system into a range of new areas of the economy.

26. The action plan for education had been drafted in consultation with a broad range of stakeholders. The Government had undertaken to increase the number of multi-denominational and non-denominational schools to 400 by 2030, and the Higher Education Authority was taking steps to improve gender balance in higher education establishments. The admission to schools bill of 2016 was currently being considered by the parliament; one of the issues being debated was whether preferential treatment should be given to the children of former pupils.

27. **Mr. Ó Briain** (Ireland) said that temporary special measures for the retention of Traveller children in schools would be introduced as part of a new strategy.

28. Since September 2016, fathers had been entitled to take two weeks' paternity leave under legislation that would be consolidated by the Family Leave Bill. The primary purpose of the Bill was to enable the Government to fulfil its commitment to provide one year's paid leave during the first year of a child's life. As the question of exactly how maternity and paternity leave should be allocated was still under consideration, the Government would welcome the Committee's recommendations in that regard. Part-time employees were entitled to receive paid parental leave.

29. **Ms. O'Sullivan** (Ireland) said that the gender poverty gap among persons over 65 was narrower than the average for the European Union. The gender poverty gap was wider in many countries that had narrower gender pension gaps, which indicated that poverty was not always the result of factors related to pensions.

30. The contributory pension system was based on the number of contributions made by the recipient. There was also an alternative, non-contributory system that was subject to a means test. When payments available to widows, widowers and survivors of civil partnerships were taken into account, the amounts received by pensioners were almost equal for men and women. At the end of 2016, 46 per cent of the 874 pensioners in receipt of the full contributory pension were women.

31. Women over 66 who were in receipt of the non-contributory pension received an average payment of around 208 euros, while those in receipt of a widow's contributory pension received an average of around 216 euros. The average pension paid to men over 66 by the Department of Social Protection was only 2 per cent higher than that paid to women. The Government was considering whether to make pension entitlements dependent on total contributions rather than yearly averages. If such a change was implemented, it would be necessary to introduce an alternative means of ensuring that pensions under the Homemaker's Scheme were not adversely affected.

32. **Ms. Luddy** (Ireland), responding to the questions asked about the issue of abortion, said that the report to be issued by the Citizens' Assembly in June would be submitted to a parliamentary subcommittee and would then be referred to the parliament. If a decision was taken to draft a white paper on the issue, that paper would probably be drafted by the Department of Health. If the parliament decided to hold a referendum on whether to repeal or amend the eighth amendment to the Constitution, a corresponding bill would have to be drafted and the wording of the question to be asked in the referendum would have to be established. The delegation was not in a position to state whether the Government would hold a referendum in the absence of a recommendation by the parliament.

33. **Ms. Baxter** (Ireland) said that the Government was committed to taking measures to reduce the gender pay gap under the Programme for Partnership Government. One such measure, which was currently being considered, would oblige companies to carry out wage surveys.

34. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that she wished to know what plans were in place to amend regulations that allowed pharmacists to refuse to provide emergency contraception on grounds of conscientious objection.

35. **Ms. Gbedemah** said that it was still not clear whether penalties had been imposed in any cases involving sexism in educational establishments or whether any young fathers had taken advantage of the Teen Parents Support Programme. Noting that 1,187 girl students had become pregnant in 2015, she asked why such a small number of those students had received a tuition grant under the Teen Parents Support Programme. Noting also the plans to establish 400 non-denominational schools, she asked the delegation to specify the total number of schools in the country. Lastly, she asked what measures had been adopted to study the problem of attrition among teaching staff in higher education and whether plans

were in place to amend the residency requirement that prevented some students from taking advantage of the Free Fees Initiative.

36. **Ms. Manalo** said that she wished to know whether any schools or universities in the State party offered courses that prepared students for careers in the diplomatic service. She asked the delegation to specify the percentages of men and women employed in the diplomatic corps and wondered what steps were being taken to ensure gender balance in that regard.

37. **Ms. Hayashi** said that she wished to know whether the State party had amended any of its national laws following its ratification of the International Labour Organization (ILO) Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189). She asked whether the Minister for Jobs, Enterprise and Innovation had considered creating work permits for domestic workers, whether the State party acknowledged that women and girls working as au pairs were vulnerable to exploitation and, if so, what steps were being taken to tackle that problem.

38. **Ms. Schulz** said that she would welcome some indication of the content of the legislation that the Government might draft in the event that a referendum led to the repeal of the eighth amendment.

39. **Ms. Baxter** (Ireland) said that information on the percentages of male and female diplomats had been included in the report submitted to the Committee.

40. **Mr. Smyth** (Ireland) said that no restrictions were placed on the availability of condoms and that emergency contraception was available, over the counter, to all holders of medical cards. The delegation was unaware of any case in which a pharmacist had refused to provide contraception on grounds of conscience. In accordance with the code of conduct for pharmacists, members of the profession were required to take reasonable actions to ensure that medical services were provided and that patient care was not jeopardized.

41. **Ms. Luddy** (Ireland) said that if a referendum was held on repealing the eighth amendment, the Protection of Life During Pregnancy Act 2013 and other relevant legislation would have to be reviewed.

42. **Ms. Feeney** (Ireland) said that the Irish diplomatic service was a career service whose members did not include political appointees. No specialized academy existed to train career diplomats. Recruitment to the diplomatic service was organized by the Public Appointments Service on the basis of competitive examinations. Outreach programmes, a youth delegate programme and internships had been established to encourage young people to consider a career in the diplomatic service.

43. **Mr. O'Leary** (Ireland) said that the residency requirement associated with the Free Fees Initiative was consistent with the recommendations of the independent Working Group set up by the Irish Government to report on improvements to the protection process. The pilot support scheme for asylum seekers had been reviewed in 2016 and would be reviewed again in 2017. The International Protection Act 2015 modified the regulations governing the entry into Ireland of persons in need of international protection, and its implementation would reduce the need for the pilot support scheme.

44. Acknowledging that a gender imbalance existed at senior levels in higher education establishments, he said that steps would be taken to address that imbalance. As to the total number of schools in Ireland, he said that there were 3,200 primary schools and around 800 post-primary schools. Given that most primary schools were under some form of religious patronage, the establishment of 400 non-denominational and multi-denominational schools would represent a significant increase in the availability of such schools.

45. The relatively low number of girls and women who had taken advantage of the Teen Parents Support Programme was explained in part by the fact that the figures did not

include teenage mothers aged 16 years and older, who were not obliged by law to attend school.

46. In order for penalties to be imposed in cases involving sexism in educational institutions, the victim and his or her parents would need to take action under the Equality Act 2004. Reports issued by the school inspectorate would also draw attention to any shortcomings in the area of gender equality.

47. **Ms. Schulz** said that the implementation of European Parliament and Council directive 2004/38/EC on the freedom of movement and residence, and the habitual residence condition, appeared to deprive Roma and other migrant women of the right to employment, social benefits and various other protections that would normally be available to European Union citizens. Those restrictions were the consequence of the State party's failure to take sufficient account of the specific housing situation of Roma women and other factors such as the language barrier. She wished to know whether the State party would consider reviewing the application of the legislation in question, in consultation with Roma and other migrant associations. She also asked whether the State party would cease to make child benefit payments contingent on the fulfilment of the habitual residence condition, as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2016 (CRC/C/IRL/CO/3-4, para. 70 (f)).

48. Noting that the 2014-2020 Rural Development Programme did not address the gender imbalance in farm ownership, she asked whether the midterm review of the Programme would incorporate a strong gender perspective and address, inter alia, the barriers that prevented women from going into farming and owning land. She wished to know how the delivery of health and well-being programmes in rural areas specifically targeted rural women living in poverty and isolation. Would the State party establish local transport schemes in rural areas to improve women's access to employment, education, training and childcare and health-care services?

49. She asked whether women refugees and asylum seekers living in direct provision centres were permitted to work before their asylum application processes were complete; whether plans were in place to increase the relatively low weekly allowance paid to such women; and whether counselling services were provided to women who were victims of gender-based violence, including harassment.

50. The number of women sentenced to prison had increased significantly. Furthermore, a large number of women were being held on remand, disproportionate numbers of Traveller women had been incarcerated, women's prisons suffered from overcrowding and a high proportion of women in prison were there because they had failed to pay court-ordered fines. She asked the delegation to explain the discrepancy between the information provided by the delegation on women imprisoned for non-payment of fines and the statistics available from other sources.

51. She asked whether the State party planned to impose more non-custodial sentences and fewer short prison sentences, which had proved to be ineffective. Noting that many Traveller women were incarcerated for poverty-related offences, she asked why such problems were not being addressed by a global strategy instead of the conflict management and resolution approach mentioned in the report (CEDAW/C/IRL/6-7, para. 267). Lastly, she asked what steps were being taken to address the lack of resources available to women with addictions; how the State party helped women leaving prison to find adequate housing, employment and support; and when the open prison for women would be established.

52. **Ms. Baxter** (Ireland) said, with respect to farm ownership, that the Department of Agriculture had implemented an initiative to encourage farmers to set up companies that were jointly owned by men and women. As farmers were often reluctant to engage in that initiative, the Department was considering various ways of making it more effective.

53. Refugee women had the right to work from the moment they arrived in Ireland. The new International Protection Act was aimed at reducing the time taken to process asylum applications.

54. **Ms. O'Sullivan** (Ireland) said that individuals' entitlement to social welfare depended on a number of conditions, including the length of time spent working in Ireland and whether the person had previously worked in a European Union member State. Individuals who did not qualify for social insurance payments could apply for social assistance payments, which were subject to means tests and other criteria, including the habitual residence condition. The case law of the European Court of Justice showed that habitual residence was a concept in use across the European Union, and the relevant provisions of Irish law were consistent with that Court's jurisprudence. No minimum period of residence was required for a person to be considered habitually resident. Individuals who were dissatisfied with a decision issued in respect of their habitual resident status could apply to the independent Social Welfare Appeals Office for redress.

55. **Mr. Hurley** (Ireland) said that the Committee's comments on farm ownership would be brought to the attention of the Department of Agriculture. It should be pointed out that women accounted for a significant proportion of those who had benefited from the Rural Development Programme that had ended in 2015.

56. **Mr. Smyth** (Ireland) said that the Government was committed to ensuring that patients throughout the country, including in remote rural areas, had access to medical services and could be treated as close to their homes as possible. In 2016, the implementation of an enhanced support framework for general practitioners had significantly increased their numbers.

57. **Mr. Dowling** (Ireland) said that, while the number of women in prison had indeed risen, some of them were incarcerated for very short periods of time. At the end of 2016, only one of the 119 women in prison had been incarcerated for failing to pay a court-ordered fine. A joint working group composed of members of the prison and probation services had considered the proposal to establish an open prison and had concluded that a step-down facility for women would be more practical and cost-effective. A tendering process for such a facility had been launched.

58. Amendments had been made to legislation with a view to reducing the number of custodial sentences. For instance, the Criminal Justice (Community Service) (Amendment) Act 2011 required sentencing judges to consider community service in cases where the applicable custodial sentence was 12 months or less.

59. A State-funded initiative for women Travellers in prison was aimed, inter alia, at building a knowledge base concerning Travellers in prison, increasing their access to prison-based services and strengthening support for their families. A housing action plan established by the Government included two specific commitments to address the housing needs of women leaving prison.

60. **Mr. Ó Briain** (Ireland) said that, as European Union citizens, members of the Roma community had the same access to employment as Irish citizens. The habitual residence condition was fully in compliance with European Union law and international human rights law. While the language barrier might make it difficult for Roma to prove that they met the habitual residence requirement, the Government was working to make the administrative processes more accessible to all.

Articles 15 and 16

61. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that a recent policy change concerning single-parent welfare support had led to a dramatic decrease in child-support payments and a rise in

poverty levels among single mothers. As of 2015, recipients of the Jobseeker's Transitional Payment were no longer under any legal obligation to contribute to the maintenance of their children unless a pre-existing court order had been issued. Furthermore, single mothers who applied for the Jobseeker's Transitional Payment were told that they must first seek maintenance from their former spouse or partner, even in cases involving domestic violence, and would face a weekly financial penalty if they failed to do so. She asked whether the Department of Social Protection planned to abolish that requirement and amend the regulations.

62. To the Committee's knowledge, the Government had not established a statutory maintenance authority and there were no guidelines on the amounts to be paid for child support. Decisions on child support payments were left to the discretion of judges, which increased the likelihood that the parties involved would resort to litigation. She asked how the Government ensured that adequate maintenance was awarded, what procedure was followed when fathers refused to pay, and whether the Government planned to set up a statutory maintenance authority.

63. The Family Home Protection Act 1976 established a highly elaborate mechanism for periodic post-divorce spousal payments that attempted to compensate for situations in which marital property was not shared. However, data on increased poverty levels among women cast doubt on the effectiveness of the legal framework. She asked whether legislation governing marital property adequately safeguarded women's rights following divorce or separation; whether the Government had studied the economic consequences of family breakdown for men, women and children; and whether it would consider reforming the current system.

64. **Ms. O'Sullivan** (Ireland) said that when an individual ceased to receive the one-parent family payment and the Department of Social Protection arranged for contributions to be made by the other parent, the Department made it clear to the parties involved that any existing maintenance payment should remain in place. Current guidelines did not require single mothers to contact abusive former partners as a condition of eligibility for the Jobseeker's Transitional Payment. Procedures were in place to ensure that single parents could still receive social payments even if they did not know the address of the other parent.

65. **Mr. Hurley** (Ireland) said that the delegation acknowledged that decisions concerning divorce and separation depended on the discretion of individual judges. The Committee's remarks about the need to study the economic consequences of family breakdown would be brought to the attention of the relevant government department.

66. **Ms. Baxter** (Ireland) said that, under existing legislation, women retained the family home following separation or divorce in the majority of cases. Although decisions concerning divorce and separation depended on the discretion of judges, extensive training was provided to the judiciary in that regard.

67. **Ms. Halperin-Kaddari** said that she wished to know whether a mechanism existed to ensure that the State paid child support to mothers whose former partners refused to make contributions.

68. **Ms. Baxter** (Ireland) said that, although no such mechanism existed, the courts could issue enforcement orders to ensure that maintenance was paid by the individuals concerned.

69. **The Chair**, thanking the delegation for the constructive dialogue, which had provided further insight into the situation of women in Ireland, said that the Committee commended the State party on its efforts and encouraged it to take all the measures necessary to give effect to the Committee's recommendations.

The meeting rose at 5.10 p.m.